

# NURSING

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER

Transforming patient care through professional practice

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A newsletter  
from the office  
of the Executive  
Chief Nursing  
Officer

Marilyn Dubree,  
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## IVORY JOINS AHRQ ADVISORY COUNCIL

Cathy Ivory, PhD, RN-BC, RNC-OB, NEA-BC, FAAN, senior director of Nursing Research for VUMC, has been appointed to the National Advisory Council for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Ivory is one of seven new members to be appointed to the 20-member panel, and her term will last two years. The AHRQ, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has a mission “to produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used.”

Executive Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN, RN, NE-BC, congratulated Ivory on her appointment.

“Cathy brings a deep well of experience to this prestigious group of accomplished individuals,” she said. “She has a passion for evidence-based practice and translating it to excellent care for our patients and families. She was nominated by her peers because they knew she would be the perfect fit for this group.”

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We have come to the end of another extraordinary year. Vanderbilt nurses continue to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic head-on. Your compassionate care for our patients and families will never be forgotten, and I am so proud to work with you.

We have much good news to share in this issue. Cathy Ivory, our senior director of Nursing Research, has been selected for the National Advisory Council for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Congratulations to Cathy on join-

ing this prestigious group.

Also in this issue, you will read about the inaugural winners of two new awards, the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing’s Preceptor of the Year and the Medical Center’s new Medical Assistant of the Year awards. Congratulations to all our winners.

I wish you all a very happy holiday season and Happy New Year with your families.

Enjoy this issue,

Ivory, who is also associate professor of Clinical Nursing at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, and secondary faculty in the Department of Biomedical Informatics, participated in her first quarterly meeting with the advisory council on Nov. 17. The agenda included issues related to health care quality measurement, primary care and research priorities, she said.

“I am delighted that nurses are a part of the National Advisory Council,” Ivory said. “I think that having the nurse’s voice on the council is just really important. Nurses are the health profession that is the closest to patient care. Nursing very much coordinates care for patients, whether they are in a hospital setting or an outpatient setting or in a community setting. The nurse’s ability to give the perspective of the patient from all settings is very important.”

Ivory said she is particularly interested in bringing her perspective on quality measurement to AHRQ. “That is something that we are very interested in terms of being able to quantify the unique contribution of the

nurse to patient care and how nurses contribute to quality and patient outcomes,” she said.

Ivory brings decades of progressive nursing leadership to the role. Born in



Ivory

Wisconsin and raised in Florida, her nursing career began in Georgia. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing degree from Georgia College and State University and spent most of her 20-year obstetric nursing career in Atlanta-area hospitals and practices. She maintained dual certifications as an informatics nurse and in inpatient obstetrics. From there, she moved to Mountain States Health Alliance in Johnson City,

Tennessee, where she served as clinical specialist and then corporate director for Women’s Services.

Her passion for obstetrics nursing and a lifelong interest in technology led her to Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, where she completed her PhD in 2011. She subsequently joined the faculty, then left Nashville in 2017 to become associate chief nurse executive and vice president for Professional Practice and Care Transformation for Indiana University Health in Indianapolis. She returned to Nashville in 2019 to assume her current role as senior director for Nursing Research at VUMC.

“I am excited for Cathy to represent VUMC on the National Advisory Council because she is a committed and passionate colleague for Quality and Patient Safety,” said Jenny Slayton, DNP, RN, senior vice president for Quality, Safety and Risk Prevention. “Her participation in this work will be able to drive improvement nationally as well as at VUMC.”

## THREE NURSES CHOSEN FOR PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR

Three nurses at Vanderbilt University Medical Center have been selected in the inaugural group of Preceptor of the Year Awards by Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN):



• Lindsay Miller

Miller, MSN, RN, NE-BC, was chosen as VUSN Nursing & Health Care Leadership Preceptor of the Year. Miller is associate nursing officer for the Surgery, Dermatology, and Orthopaedics Patient Care Centers.

• Galileo MacInnis, MSN, RN, AGACNP-BC, was selected as VUSN Adult-Gerontology Acute Care NP (Intensivist Focus) Preceptor of the Year. MacInnis works as a nurse practitioner in the Burn Intensive Care Unit.

• Bree Osborne, MSN, RN, ACNP-BC, was picked as VUSN Adult-Gerontology Acute Care NP Preceptor of the Year. Osborne is a nurse practitioner in Thoracic Surgery.

“VUSN started the Preceptor of the Year Award in 2021 to recognize the outstanding and exceptional contribution our preceptors make to teaching students in the clinical or practice setting,” said Brian

Widmar, PhD, RN, ACNP-BC, CCRN, CNE, FAANP, associate



MacInnis

professor of Nursing at VUSN. “There are so many fantastic providers who have committed to VUSN and our students and share their time and expertise every year.”

Nurses are eligible for the award if they are preceptors who have committed at least one year of service to VUSN or precepted at least two students in VUSN specialty programs,” Widmar said. The award is not limited to nurse practitioners, but recipients must be approved by VUSN specialty faculty to precept students in the specialty from which the award was given.

“I would like to offer my warmest congratulations to these three exceptional nurses,” said VUMC Executive Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN, RN, NE-BC. “Precepting the next generation of nurses is one of the most important things we do. It is crucial to the mission of both

the Medical Center and the School of Nursing. I am excited about this new recognition.”

VUSN offers nine nurse practitioner options, a nurse midwifery program and two non-clinical tracks — the Nursing and Health

Care Leadership and Nursing Informatics programs. Widmar said the School of Nursing hopes to recognize one nurse preceptor from each area yearly.

Preceptors play a crucial role in the future of nursing, Widmar said.

“The practice experience is such an important part of a student’s preparation as an advanced practice nurse,” he said. “Our preceptors exemplify the highest standards of practice, and truly are remarkable examples of the impact we can make as advanced practice nurses upon the health of our society. They are role models of leadership, professionalism and expert caring to our students. They help students apply theory to practice, and they help inform our teaching. It’s great to be able to recognize them for the amazing work they do and their commitment to VUSN and to our students.”

## TWO RECIPIENTS OF MEDICAL ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR

Vanderbilt University Medical Center has announced two recipients of the inaugural Medical Assistant of the Year awards for 2021.

Paula Ciero, CCMA, received the award for Children's Hospital Outpatient Care and Jo Ann Kounlavong, RMA, received the honor for Vanderbilt Medical Group. They were

chosen for demonstrating outstanding Credo behaviors, willingness to consistently exceed role expectations and dedication to patients, colleagues and the VUMC community.

Ciero is a medical assistant in the Pediatric Allergy and Immunology clinic at Vanderbilt Health One Hundred Oaks. She said her job responsibilities include bringing patients to exam rooms, managing the flow of the clinic and administering vaccines.

"I love to help," Ciero said. "I love working in this clinic because I learn so much from my co-workers and providers. I work with an amazing team that helps me be the best that I can be. It is an honor to serve

our kids and their families." According to her nomina-



Ciero



Kounlavong

tion, Ciero takes the initiative to order things like rubber ducks, individual packs of crayons and coloring books for her young patients. "Paula is the epitome of Credo. She puts her patients first in all that she does. She treats her team members with respect and supports our clinic so well. Paula is diligent about keeping patients and families up to date with information about delays and being seen."

Kounlavong is a medical assistant at the Gastroenterology clinic at Vanderbilt Medical Group Franklin. Her job responsibilities include documenting patients' medical histories, getting them ready to see providers and scheduling for

procedures. She said her favorite part of the job is patient care.

"I've always liked caring for patients," she said. "I just like to make sure that they're taken care of and have the resources they need."

According to her nomination, Kounlavong works collaboratively with other health care team members

in many aspects of her day. "Every day, every minute, every second Jo Ann is at work, she goes above and beyond helping her colleagues with the goal of providing excellent patient care," one provider writes. Another says Kounlavong is "the type of employee every employer should be grateful to have."

Kounlavong said the award "means a lot. It means that all my hard work has not gone unnoticed and is appreciated by everyone. I put a lot of time ... sweat and tears into this and I like to make sure that my clinic is running smooth, my patients are taken care of, and I am doing all that I can to support my providers."



## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!